

Teacher's lesson in stud farming

In the last two years she has taken three weeks holiday. Last year, she spent a week in Longreach to coincide with the sales there.

"No, it wasn't business and pleasure," she said. "My business is a pleasure to me. Any trip away is associated with business."

That's the sort of dedication she has put into the Myola Stud since taking up the challenge of her friend John Wightman and his brother Ion, two Brisbane businessmen who own the property.

They had already bought 80 cows in 1978 with a view to starting a Santa Gertrudis stud.

The animals came from Kabunga, Yarrowonga, Cumberland, Rosevale, Warooby and the Belinda dispersal sales.

In 1980, Gaye helped choose the three senior sires: Cumberland Rotarian (cheap at \$10,500, she says), Yarrowonga Waco Nelson at \$18,500 and Rosevale Valido 77 at \$9000.

For the last few years she has run the stud alone.

She said: "It's a real science and the more involved I became the more interested and fascinated I became."

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"I loved teaching and it was a major decision which took quite a lot of agonising."

"It's the idea of trying to breed the perfect animal. And I want Myola to become one of the best small studs in the country."

She is quick to thank Alastair and Louise Basingthwaite — "the bee's knees in Santa Gertrudis" — and Ross Douglas for his advice and criticism.

A ruthless culling was ordered. City folks might equate the process with a Miss Myola quest.

Each female was judged on femininity, fertility and milk production.

Those contestants that did not measure up were sold or ended up on the barbecue.

Now Gaye runs a herd of 120 compared with the 800 to 1000 on top name studs.

"So we have only a tenth of the chance they have of producing that rip snorter," she said.

But by 1983, Myola's Innisplains Cheyenne was winning grand champion-

ships, including supreme exhibit at Rockhampton.

Instead of keeping him as a sire, Gaye sold him. At \$14,000 he was sale topper at that year's Big S sale in Argyle.

Her idea is to introduce new bloodlines to the stud instead of risking weakening by interbreeding.

With this in mind, she bought two more bulls in 1983 and 1984, Sydney Grand Champion Waco Raffles (\$27,000) and Waco Omega (\$38,000).

The 1985 show season started last month with Gaye hoping for and winning further honors.

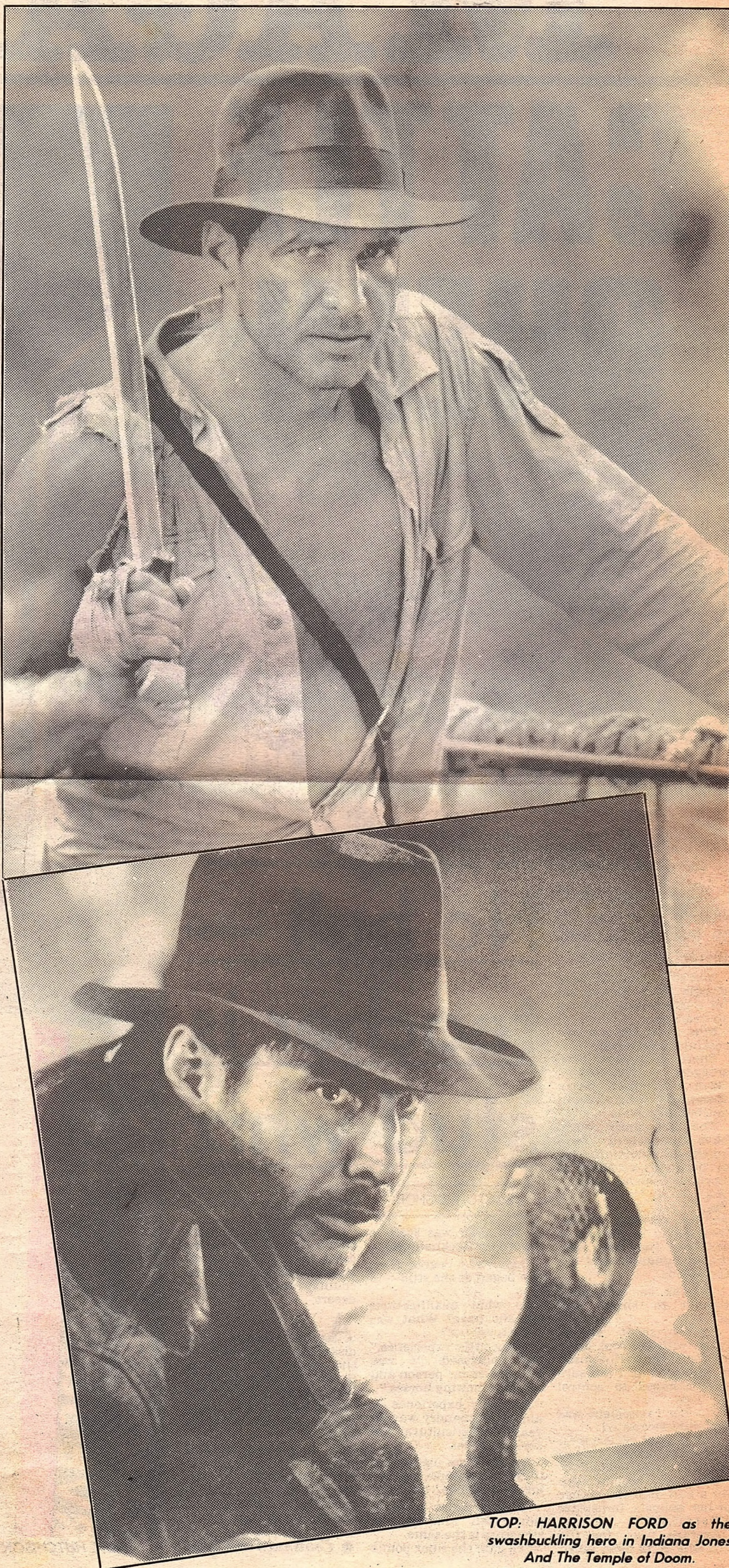
Innisplains Fernando and Emmanuel have won major titles at Allora, Pittsworth and Oakey.

How far has the sports-loving stud director progressed since school?

If she began in division 10 of the Santa Gertrudis league, she reckons she is now in division two. Her ambition is to beat the champions, Yarrowonga.

And at the rate she is improving, perhaps that clash won't be so far away.

ADVENTURER AND SPACE



TOP: HARRISON FORD as the swashbuckling hero in *Indiana Jones And The Temple of Doom*.

ABOVE: Indiana Jones takes on the nasties in *Raiders Of The Lost Ark*.

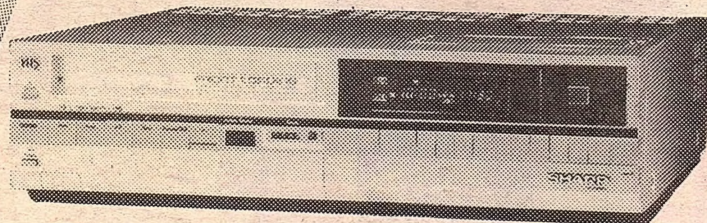
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